

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 3RD AEROSPACE RESCUE & RECOVERY GROUP (MAC)
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96307



REPLY TO
ATTN OF: 3C

6 November 1967

SUBJECT: Commander's Letter

TO: Brigadier General Allison C. Brooks
Commander ARRS

Sir

1. Just a month ago today, I assumed command of the 3rd ARRGP, looking ahead to what I am sure will be one of the finest years of my Air Force career. The overlap with Al Lovelady was most rewarding since it gave me an opportunity for a field visit to the major operating units prior to assuming command and also permitted me to meet the many contacts in 7AF with whom it is essential to maintain good relations. Prior to assumption of command, I was privileged to attend the 7AF Commanders' Conference on 2 October, which gave me an excellent opportunity to absorb General Momyer's views and policy on a great variety of subjects. We saw Al Lovelady off on 18 October after he had returned from his R&R in Sydney, Australia. I'm sure that he left with greatly mixed emotions; happy to be going back to his family, but somewhat saddened to be leaving the 3rd ARRGP and ARRS. His experience in this theater will certainly provide an excellent background for his new assignment at WPAFB. There is little doubt that ARRS will benefit from his endeavors in the Life Support area.

2. From 19 to 24 October, I completed my initial visits to all Thailand Rescue units, including a two day tour of the forward operating locations, participating as a crewmember. I was also on hand at Don Muang for acceptance of the last HH-3E to be modified with the refueling and armament kits. This was also a farewell visit to Mr Carboni, who, in my estimation, has done an outstanding job and should be commended. Although this particular aircraft had been on the ground for five weeks, the functional check flight flown by the acceptance crew while I was present disclosed not a single write-up. Mr Carboni is one of the old school who really takes pride in the quality of his work and supervision and treats an aircraft as something more than an impersonal object.

Exec: Copies to staff for action/info

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MDC

3. With the forthcoming rotation of Lt Colonel Warner Britton from Det 1, 37 ARRSq, at Nakhon Phanom, I am transferring Lt Col Wells, operations officer of the 37 ARRSq at Da Nang, to assume command of the NKP unit. Concurrently, I am transferring Lt Col Lowe from NKP to Da Nang. This is necessary because of the seniority of Lt Col Lowe and the advisability of placing a highly experienced helicopter pilot in command of Det 1, 37 ARRSq. As you know, Lt Col Wells was transferred to Da Nang from Det 1, 37 ARRSq, to provide the know-how for the 37th while they were suffering some growing pains and engaged in implementing the concept of HH-3E orbits in the Gulf of Tonkin. Lt Col Caughron has a firm grasp on the reins of the Da Nang operation and has agreed that transferring Lt Col Wells to NKP is in the best interests of the overall operation. PDC

4. We are finally making some headway on our facilities at Da Nang. There are many contributing factors to this phenomenon. These include backing and frequent queries on status by Hq MAC; a thunderstorm which tore a large hole in the hangar roof and made the hangar uninhabitable for safety reasons; the assistance of the Red Horse people triggered by some personal contacts here at Tan Son Nhut; and, lastly, a high degree of interest in the Jolly Greens recently evidenced by Colonel Bob Maloy, the 366th TFW commander. We had a few chuckles here in the Group over your message to Colonel Maloy indicating partial payment completed for hospitality received. In addition to the new roof, which has been completed, the Da Nang Base Facilities Board has approved the construction of maintenance, operations, and administration offices within the hangar against the rear wall and including a mezzanine which will be air conditioned. This will provide a vast improvement in work areas and general working conditions. The next move for improvement, but not yet formally proposed, will be for a new hangar floor. MOC

5. The second increment of HH-53Bs is in place at Udorn for a total of four on hand, and our maintenance report of 31 October showed 100% in commission. I make mention of this since it will probably be unusual to see this status very often until our logistic support problems are solved. The 432nd TRW commander has asked 13AF for assistance in straightening out his supply problems, which include ours also but which are further compounded by the additional spares coming in to support four new units moving to Udorn. As to the ISSL, against WRAMA-provided shipping data of 83%, 48%, and 94% for airframe spares, engine spares, and avionics spares respectively, only 44%, 17%, and 8% have been identified as of 31 October. We have people working in supply continuously, but we are unable to go any faster than the base people. I am most favorably MOC

impressed with the personnel in Det 2, 37 ARRSq, and particularly the commander, Lt Col Jim Dixon. I visited the unit on 23 and 24 October, which happened to coincide with their first operational mission and their first save. Somehow, they thought I had arranged the mid-air collision of a pair of F-105s south of Udorn to coincide with my visit so that I could observe their degree of readiness. Suffice to say, when called upon, they were ready. The celebration in the club that evening was noteworthy with the posting of their first large green save. The unit is well organized administratively with required publications over 90% on hand; excellent training programs, including OJT, in effect; an aggressive UR/EUR program; over 50 additional duties defined and personnel on orders; and a positive safety program. In regard to the latter, the commander has refused permission for any of his personnel to purchase motorcycles, which is a significant contribution to ground safety, particularly in the Udorn area. The aircrews are up to peak proficiency, having completed refueling training, hoist work, and air-to-ground mini-gun qualification. As soon as a fix on the sleeve and spindle assemblies is completed and current restrictions are lifted, the HH-53Bs will be phased into the FOB operation, commensurate with logistics support capability. Det 1, 37 ARRSq, crews are working closely with Det 2 crews for orientation and route familiarization. We plan for an experienced HH-3E pilot to accompany each HH-53B deployment until all crews are familiar with the FOB area of operation. When adequate logistic support for increased flying hours can be guaranteed, we shall proceed with the forward orbit concept which, if successful and supportable, may result in elimination of the requirement for using the most advanced FOB except for emergency purposes. Det 2 is eager to become operational, and I believe sincerely that this unit will make new Rescue history with breakthroughs in concepts, techniques, and applications. ODC

6. In December 1965, I attended an E&E conference at CINCPAC and made a strong plea for Army and Navy representation in the JSARC. 7AF Regulation No 64-2, which is a joint reg signed off by COMNAVFORV, USARV, COMSEVENTHFLT, and Third MAF, is the final implementing document of the recommendations of that conference and provides for a full time Army representative and also a Navy representative, as required. As of 16 October, Lt Col John Collins, USA, reported for duty in the JSARC. The Navy has taken the position that a hot line between the JSARC and COMNAVFORV will meet the requirements of the regulation, but has agreed to provide a representative in the JSARC if and when physically required. This is a start in the right direction and, to the best of my knowledge, is the first time that a representative of another service has been assigned to a JSARC. This week, Lt Col Holman will accompany Lt Col Collins to ODC

the subordinate centers (Compress and Queen), and major operating units to familiarize him with all facets of our operation, including participation in a Crown mission. We are already gathering additional information on Army capabilities which will enhance the SAR posture in SEA. The joint aspects of the JSARC will be thoroughly documented for future use and, as doctrine evolves, may lead to joint participation in ARRS JSARCs in other areas of the world. Concurrent with the assignment of the Army member, we are taking action to modernize the JSARC for better mission presentation and improved communications.

7. The loss of JG-30 (66-13283) in the midst of our flex coupling shortage was felt rather deeply. Again, however, we are grateful that the characteristics of rotor craft permitted our crew to survive the 200-plus vertical drop through the jungle canopy. At this time, we are unable to get a medical prognosis on Captain Mulder, the RCC; however, with three breaks in his right arm, including one compound fracture, it appears that he may be out of the game for a long stretch. Until now, they have been unable to set the arm in a cast because of the treatment necessary for the compound fracture. The pararescueman was operated on and had his spleen removed. His other major problem was a separation of the sternum (breastbone) as well as some deep muscular wrenching. The medics believe he will recover fully without permanent disability and will be restored to full pararescue duties. The co-pilot and flight mechanic had relatively minor injuries. As a matter of information, that particular mission was the last alert scheduled for Lieutenant Walter (CP) as he is being rotated this week with one year of SEASIA rescue experience behind him. ASG

8. General Momyer has appointed me as a member of his "A" Awards Board, which reviews recommendations for the Airman's Medal, Silver Star, Legion of Merit, and higher awards. This is indeed an honor and places me in a position to see that our people get appropriate recognition at the highest level. It is not unusual for the "A" Board to recommend upgrade from a DFC to a Silver Star or from a Silver Star to an Air Force Cross. With Lt Col Holman sitting on the "B" Board, we have the spectrum of awards well covered. Although these meetings consume one afternoon each week, the time is well spent and permits an overview of brave acts and gallantry of other than ARRS personnel. The heroism displayed by Air Force crews and other Air Force personnel is an almost unbelievable story without end, for which many fiction writers would give their eye teeth for access. PDC

9. Prior to leaving Orlando and also in briefing at PARRC, I was made to feel a special concern for OJT in the 3rd ARRGp. General Momyer has also recently laid additional stress on the requirement for OJT since statistics show a decrease in the number of fully qualified personnel arriving in the theater. I find that the Group closely monitors and guides the OJT program. In the past four months, the SKT pass rate has risen from 48 to 73%. The success achieved to date has been brought about by several factors. First, the use of one of our NCOs serving full time as the Group OJT Monitor, and secondly, through the concerted efforts of our units to do the job - with command backing. T/Sgt Maher, formerly a 37th ARRSq helicopter mechanic, is the Group OJT Monitor and spends most of his time in the field; not inspecting, but helping. At the present time, we have 290 of 937 assigned airmen on OJT (30%). In reviewing the ARRS statistics as of 30 June, it is interesting to note the impact our program has on ARRS overall statistics. As of that date, there were 2223 airmen assigned to ARRS, with 680 on OJT. In the 3rd ARRGp, there were 845 airmen assigned with 241 on OJT, or 35% of ARRS personnel on OJT. I will continue to monitor and guide this program personally, as it is obvious that the success of our program affects the overall statistical status of the ARRS program to a significant degree.

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PDC

10. Another area of concern to me has been the status of our officer and airman records. The impact of the 1360th CBPO's inaccuracies is still being felt, although there has been a decided improvement since the 61st CBPO assumed responsibility. Perhaps being overly eager to provide a new base line, we proposed to send a team of Personnel Technicians from the major units and the Group to the 61st CBPO for a one-time fix by on-the-spot correction and updating. Colonel Smith advised of your views on letting the CBPO do their own work and assures me that his people are working closely and daily with the CBPO to get the folders in shape. I have recommended to my commanders that they advise each individual going on R&R to Hawaii that a spare hour might profitably be used by arranging for a records review at the CBPO.

PDC

11. The Saigon Bureau of LIFE Magazine has expressed interest in doing a feature on Rescue operations in SEA in January or possibly February. LIFE is going directly to DOD for official approval and establishment of ground rules. My Information Officer is working on this project with the LIFE people in conjunction with the 7AF Information Office. I will keep you informed as significant developments occur.

F01

12. Following information regarding our saves for August, September, and October is submitted:

	Aug	Sep	Oct
Combat Rescue Opportunities	45	26	31
Combat Saves	39	16	27
Non-Combat Saves	24	21	24

Total Saves CY 67	
Combat	331
Non-Combat	215
	546

Total Saves since Dec 64	
Combat	868
Non-Combat	336
	1204

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F01

Paul E. Leske

PAUL E. LESKE, Colonel, USAF
Commander

Cy to: PARRC (PRCCO)